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## Gold placer mining proposed for area in Horseshoe Bend

**By Joseph Bauman**  
Deseret News staff writer

VERNAL — A gold placer mining operation is proposed for an area within the Green River's Horseshoe Bend, 10 miles south of Vernal.

The method is similar to the kind of placer mining done by prospectors in the great California gold rush of 1849 — using nearby river water to separate rich ore sand from the soil.

The operation is outlined in a memo sent to the Utah Division of State Lands and Forestry by project planners Arthur J. Gibby and Dean Ward. So far, only small-scale mining is planned, to test the value of deposits.

It would take place in Uintah County, within the Uintah Basin, with a 34-acre gravel bed targeted for development. Environmental impacts predicted by Jerry W. Mansfield, mineral resources specialist for the division, are "temporary disturbance of soils and vegetation."

Gibby and Ward wrote, "In order to take ore from this 34-acre gravel bed, we are going to have to work a little less than two acres in a 12-month period of time." Top soil — which the partners said is mostly sandy — would be stripped off.

Underlying sand would be run through a concentrator to separate black mineral-rich deposits from the soil. It would be processed at another location, wrote the pair.

Water would be taken from the Green River for the concentrator. Gibby and Ward wrote that they will store used water in at least one settling pond about 200 feet from the river.

"This will ensure us of having the water that is returned to the river to be free of sand and silt," they said. No chemicals are to be used in the process, "thus there will be no contamination of soil or water."

After gravel and sand have been processed, soil will be smoothed and reseeded.

"If this property proves to be highly profitable, a mining plan shall be filed at least 90 days before any other work is done."

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